

Risk assessment for lone workers

A risk assessment should be undertaken of:

- ▶ the working space provide by the employer for an employee (see Information Sheet 3: Housing and Office Provision)
- ▶ the working practices for a lone worker.

The risk assessment would be part of the Health and Safety at Work Policy of an Employing Body.

Resources

- ▶ *Health and Safety in churches and other places of worship* downloadable from Methodist Insurance's website:
www.methodistinsurance.co.uk/PDF%27s/Health%20&%20Safety.pdf
- ▶ *Personal Safety at Work : Lone Working* – which is available from The Suzy Lamplugh Trust (www.suzylamplugh.org)

Working practices for a lone worker

Lone workers include those who:

- ▶ work away from an office base (eg visiting)
- ▶ work outside normal working hours (eg cleaners)
- ▶ are the only person on the premises (eg administrator)
- ▶ work in the same building as colleagues but in a space on their own (eg receptionists)

It is recommended that all employers obtain the booklet produced by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust *Personal Safety at Work - Lone Working*.

At times many church employees will be in situations where they are a 'lone worker'. The recommendations below try to be realistic about what can and cannot be put in place. It is recognised that the Church, as an employer, does not have the backup structure associated with a large business. At the same time, however, it aims to be a good employer who is concerned about the safety of its employees.

Many employees work part-time from their home base. If the employee lived on their own, it could be some time before the employer would notice that the employee hadn't been seen for a while unless some system was in place to account for their safety.

Responsibilities of the employee

- ▶ To take reasonable care of their own safety
- ▶ Report any incidents of violence or aggression
- ▶ Arrange to meet unknown individuals in a public place and preferably with another person present
- ▶ If you are making home visits and have even the slightest concern about a visit make sure that someone knows where you are going and that you have a mobile phone with you turned on
- ▶ If practical, on leaving your work base tell someone where you are going and when you hope to be back
- ▶ Leave a note stating who and where you are visiting and how you will get there
- ▶ Consider a 'buddy system' when you let a colleague or friend know that you have arrived at a visit/premises and when leaving a visit/premises
- ▶ Think about carrying a personal shriek alarm

▶ **Be 'streetwise' – notice what is going on around you**

Responsibilities of the employer

- ▶ Assess the 'reasonably foreseeable risks' (eg Do the pubs and youth club finish at the same time? Does the cleaner work late at night and leave down an unlit passageway?)
- ▶ Is there glass in the office door so that all callers can be seen before the door is opened?
- ▶ Ensure that a system is in place for calling for help if there is a problem on the premises
- ▶ Keep on file the employees and next of kin contact phone numbers and car details if this is used for work purposes. Also any health issues that may affect the employee whilst lone working
- ▶ Ensure that a system is in place so that the employer knows that an employee is safe when working on their own either on or off the premises. (eg phone call, visit)
- ▶ Offer to all employees making home visits a mobile phone. Consider whether other employees would benefit from the provision of a mobile phone
- ▶ Ensure that the employee receives a Health and Safety Induction and that the Certificate of Employers Liability is displayed in the office
- ▶ Check that insurance cover adequately covers the work to be undertaken
- ▶ Ensure an accident book is kept up to date